

***Linaria canadensis* (L.) Chaz.  
var. *texana* (Scheele) Pennell**  
blue toadflax  
Scrophulariaceae (Figwort Family)

**Status:** State Review Group 1

**Rank:** G4G5S1

**General Description:** Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1959): *Linaria canadensis* var. *texana* is a tall slender annual or winter annual from a short taproot. It is 4 to 20 in. (10-50 cm) tall, essentially hairless throughout, and somewhat covered with a waxy coating. There is a basal rosette of short, prostrate stems, the tips of which grow upward. The leaves of these stems are shorter and relatively broader than those of the erect stems. There are 1 to several erect main stems from the base that are simple and sparsely leafy. The leaves of the erect stems are linear,  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1- $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (1-3.5 cm) long and less than  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. (1-2.5 mm) wide; the lowermost leaves are often opposite or in 3's, and the others are alternate. The inflorescence is a raceme (an unbranched, elongated inflorescence with stalked flowers that mature from the bottom upward). The racemes are nearly naked. The flower is light blue and two-lipped. It has a pale, scarcely raised palate (a raised appendage on the lower lip of the corolla), and is  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (10-12 mm) long, not including the  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (5-9 mm) spur. The seeds are densely covered with tuber-like projections.

**Identification Tips:** There are two varieties of *Linaria canadensis* in Washington, both of which could be found in the Puget Lowlands: var. *texana*, and var. *canadensis*, which is a species of eastern North America not native to Washington. The flower of var. *texana* is  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (10-12 mm) long, with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (5-9 mm) spur, while the flower of var. *canadensis* is less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (8-10 mm) long, with a  $1/8$  to  $1/4$  in. (2-6 mm) spur. The seeds of var. *texana* are densely covered with tuber-like projections, whereas the seeds of var. *canadensis* are smooth.

**Phenology:** This taxon flowers from April through June.

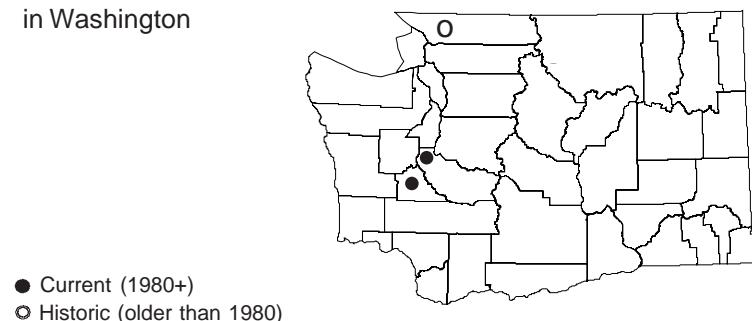
**Range:** The taxon is distributed throughout North America from British Columbia to Saskatchewan, south to Texas, and northeast to Virginia. In Washington it has been found in Thurston, Pierce and Whatcom counties. There may have also been historic collections from King and San Juan counties.

***Linaria canadensis* var. *texana***  
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Known distribution  
of *Linaria canadensis*  
var. *texana*  
in Washington



***Linaria canadensis* var. *texana***

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**Habitat:** The taxon has been found in Washington on glacial outwash prairies from 140 to 200 feet (30-60 m) elevation. Associated species at one or more sites include red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), silver hairgrass (*Aira caryophyllea*), hairy cats-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), crown brodiaea (*Brodiaea coronaria*), upland larkspur (*Delphinium nuttallii*), slender cinquefoil (*Potentilla gracilis*), and violets (*Viola* spp.).

**Ecology:** The prairies on which this taxon occurs have extremely well drained soils that contain very little organic matter.

**State Status Comments:** This taxon is known from less than five recent occurrences, each with very small populations. Because this taxon was recently added to the Washington rare plant list, not much is known about the degree of its rarity in the state at this time.

**Inventory Needs:** South Puget Sound prairies should be systematically surveyed for possible populations. More work is needed to identify threats to the taxon.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** Definite threats and management concerns for this taxon have not been identified. Invasive plant species on the prairies may pose a threat to the taxon.

**Comments:** A synonym for *Linaria canadensis* var. *texana* is *Nuttallanthus texanus* (Scheele) D.A. Sutton.

**References:**

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson.  
1959. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 4: Ericaceae Through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 510 pp.

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